

Message Text

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1. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT LONGTERM OUTLOOK FOR AVIATION MARKET HERE IS QUITE GOOD, AND FOR THIS REASON CAMEROON SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN GENERAL AVIATION AND AVIONICS TECHNICAL TRADE MISSION ITINERARY. MISSION PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE WARNED, HOWEVER, THAT CAMEROON MARKET IS QUITE SMALL, THAT THE SHORT-TO-MEDIUM TERM OUTLOOK IS ONLY FAIR, AND THAT DEVELOPMENT OF A MARKET FOR US PRODUCTS WILL DEPEND TO A LARGE EXTENT UPON SELLERS LOCATING SUITABLE SOURCES OF FINANCING, HAVING ADEQUATE LOCAL REP AND OFFERING GOOD AFTER SALES SERVICE. DESPITE THESE QUALIFIERS, IF PARTICIPANTS REGARD MISSION AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE IN MISSIONARY SELLING, TO MAKE A COHERENT PRESENTATION OF ROLE OF AVIATION IN INTERNAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF CAMEROON, WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THEY HAVE GOOD CHANCE TO REAP HANDSOME LONGTERM BENEFITS.

2. WITH REGARD TO COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT SALES, IN SHORT-TO-MEDIUM TERM, U.S. IS VICTIM OF ITS OWN SUCCESS, DURING PAST
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 YAOUND 04427 081043Z

YEAR GURC HAS CONCLUDED PURCHASES OF ONE BOEING 737 AND TWO C-130 S (ONE ALREADY DELIVERED), WHICH WILL BE USED PRIMARILLY BY CAMAIR FOR CARGO HAULS. IN ADDITION, GURC IS CONTEMPLATING PRUCHASE OF BOEING 727 FOR USE BY PRESIDENT AHIDJO ANDBY CAMAIR. IT IS NOW LIKELY THAT FOR NEXT SEVERAL YEARS GURC WILL ALLOCATE FUNDS TO OTHER AREAS WHILE CAMAIR ATTEMPTS TO FULLY INTEGRATE RECENT ACQUISITIONS INTO ITS OPERATIONS.

MARKET FOR LIGHT AIRCRAFT IS QUITE LIMITED, ONLY ONE OR TWO BEING PRUCHASED EACH YEAR. NEVERTHELESS, GIVEN CAMEROONS ELONGATED SHAPE AND INADEQUATE RAIL AND HIGHWAY NETWORKS, WE BELIEVE GOOD POTENTIAL MARKET EXISTS FOR LIGHT CORPORATE AIRCRAFT. TECHNICAL TRADE MISSION SHOULD DEVOTE TIME IN ITS PRESENTATION TO DEMONSTRATING HOW USE OF LIGHT CORPORATE AIRCRAFT. COULD PROMOTE EFFICIENCY AND GENERATE SAVINGS. THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN INQUIRIES FROM TIMBER COMPANIES CONCERNING HELICOPTERS. CURRENTLY, THERE IS ONE FRENCH ALOUETTE LEASED BY ELF-SEREPCA AT DOLLARS 1,000 AN HOUR FOR VISITING OFF-SHORE DRILLING RIG.

3. CURRENT FIVE YEAR PLA (1976-81) EARMARKS SOME DOLLARS 45.5 MILLION FOR AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION, OF WHICH DOLLARS 34 MILLION WILL BE APPLIED TO THE AIRPORTS OF DOUALA, YAOUNDE, AND GAROUA, AND DOLS 11.4 MILLION TO SMALLER SECONDARY AIRPORTS. ACCORDING TO ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CIVIL AVIATION, ACTUAL SITUATION IS AS FOLLOWS: A) DOUALA AIRPORT IS ALL BUT FINISHED AND IT IS UNLIKELY FURTHER FUNDS WILL BE EXPENDED ON IT DURING THE FIVE YEAR PLAN, B) GURC WOULD LIKE TO INSTALL NEW INSTRUMENT LANDING SYSTEM AT YAOUNDE, IF FINANCING AVAILABLE, AND IS ALSO PLANNING TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR NEW YAOUNDE RUNWAY SUITABLE FOR FOUR-ENGINE JET AIRCRAFT, C) FRENCH FIRM COLAS IS BUILDING RUNWAY FOR NEW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AT GAROUA AND GURC IS IN NEGOTIATIONS NOW, MOST LIKELY WITH FRENCH, FOR FINANCING TERMINAL AT GAROUA., IF THIS IS TURE, IT IS LIKELY FRENCH FRIMS WILL ALSO

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 YAOUND 04427 081043Z

FURNISH MOST EQUIPMENT FOR TERMINAL, D) SECONDARY AIRPORTS AND FIELDS HAVE LOW PRIORITY IN FIVE YEAR PLAN AND WORK WILL BE

PERFORMED ONLY IF FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE.

4. IT IS ALSO WORTH NOTING THAT CAMEROON, AS WELL AS MOST OTHER FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN COUNTRIES, IS A MEMBER OF THE FRENCH SPONSORED ASECNA (AGENCY FOR AIR SAFETY IN AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR). ASECNA PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN DETERMINING WHAT GROUND CONTROL EQUIPMENT IS USED, AND IT OFTEN DRAWS UP SPECIFICATIONS CONSISTENT MAINLY WITH FRENCH EQUIPMENT.

5. CAMEROONIAN STATISTICS SHOW AIR NAVIGATION IMPORTS AS FOLLOWS: 1977 (FIRST 4 MONTHS) - DOLS 868,000., 1976 - DOLS 2,860,000., 1975 - 1,940,000 1974 - 6,480,000 RECENT AIRCRAFT PURCHASES SHOULD BE REFLECTED IN STATISTICS DURING 1977.

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